

Exposition of the Gospel of John CHAPTER 56

CHRIST'S CONCLUDING CONSOLATIONS

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Transcript

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John 16:23-33

The following is an Analysis of the dosing section of John 16:— 1. Asking the Father in the name of Christ, verses 23, 24. 2. Christ's promise to show the Father plainly, verse 25. 3. The Father's love made known, verses 26, 28. 4. The confession of the apostles, verses 29, 30. 5. Christ's challenge of their faith, verse 31. 6. Christ's solemn prediction, verse 32. 7. Christ's comforting assurance, verse 33. Our present section contains the dosing words of our Lord's Paschal Discourse. We trust that many readers have shared the writer's sense of wonderment as we have passed from chapter to chapter and verse to verse. A truly wondrous one was this address of Christ. It stands quite by itself, for there is nothing else like it in the four Gospels. Here the Savior is alone with His own, and most blessedly does He reveal His tender affections for them. Here He speaks no longer to those whose hopes were to be realized in Judaism. Here He anticipates what is treated of in fuller detail in the Epistles, speaking as He does of the Christian's position, portion, privileges and responsibilities. There is a fulness in His words which it is impossible for us to exhaust, a depth we can never completely fathom in this life. Every verse will richly repay the most diligent and prolonged study. In the closing verses of John 16 the Lord Jesus proceeds to set forth even more fully the blessings and privileges which were to issue from His going to heaven, declaring, too, the Father's love for those whom He had given to the Son. First, He assures believers of the readiness of the Father to grant unto them whatsoever they asked Him in the Son's worthy name. Next, He tells them that in thus asking, their joy should be made full. Then He announces that the time would come when He should no more speak in dark sayings, but He would show plainly of the Father. This is followed by the declaration that the Father loveth them because they loved the Son. Then He reminds them again that, having come forth from the Father into the world, He would leave the world and return to the Father. After this there is a break made by the disciples affirming their faith in Him. This is met by the solemn warning that, nevertheless, they would forsake Him. Then He closes by His never-to-be-forgotten words, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." May the Spirit of the Truth grant us His sorely needed guidance as we ponder this passage together. "In that day ye shall ask me nothing" (John 16:23). This short

sentence has proven a sore puzzle to many of the commentators. There is wide difference of opinion, both as to what "day" is in view here, and as to what is signified by "ye shall ask me nothing." That Christ was here looking forward needs not to be argued; but how far forward is what many have not found it easy to decide. Did He mean that day, after the brief interval of separation when they should meet again, of His resurrection? Did He mean the day of pentecost, when the Spirit was to descend upon them, enduing them with power? Did He mean the whole period of Christianity, the "day of salvation?" Or, did He employ this term in the sense that it has in so many Old Testament prophecies (see Isaiah 2:11; Isaiah 5:30; Isaiah 11:10, etc.), the day of His public manifestations? Or, did He look beyond the bounds of earth's history to the unending perfect "day", the Day of glory? Each of these meanings has been severally contended for by able expositors, and in view of the profound fulness of our Lord's words, we would hesitate to limit them to any one of these possible alternatives: probably several of them are to be combined. "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing." This is not the first time that this expression was used by Christ. In John 14:20 we find that He said, "At [in] that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me, and I in you." But even there this expression can hardly be limited to one specific reference. If the reader will turn back to our comments on that verse he will find that we have explained it to signify: first, the day when the Holy Spirit was given to guide believers into all the truth; second, and ultimately, to the day of glory, when we shall know even as we are known. It is thus that we understand "In that day" here in John 16:23; having both a narrower and wider meaning, a nearer and a remoter application. "When in immediate connection with what has just been said, we find the greatest promise connected with the strikingly prominent 'in that day' it becomes needful to mark carefully the meaning of this formula. It is obvious that it cannot mean any individual day; and we cannot avoid seeing that the time signified by it begins with the day of the resurrection, if we rightly understood the great turning point of the future, which our Lord since John 14:3 has had always before His eyes, has its commencement in the resurrection-morning after the night of suffering and death. But as certain as we have seen embraced in John 16:20-22, a comprehensive glance at all the future of the Church, must we in this connected but heightened conclusion of all, give the words their furtherest reach of signification. The Lord, as we think at least, intends this 'in that day' to include tint of all, the whole period of the dispensation of the Spirit, which already typically commenced in His first return and seeing them again:—and then, pre-eminently, the end of this time, the consummation of the fulness of the Spirit in His own when He shall have unfolded and imparted all that is Christ's to His people. This is plain from the greatness of the promise connected with it, which can never have its full realization till that goal is reached. 'And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Great and unfathomable word.'" (Stier.) But what is meant by "ye shall ask me nothing?" Strangely and deplorably has this been perverted by some. There have been a few who have argued from this verse that we are here forbidden to address Christ, directly, in prayer. But Acts 1:24; 7:59, to say nothing of many passages in the Epistles, dearly refutes such an error. "Ye shall ask me nothing." The first key to this is found in the particular term our Lord here employed. In the Greek another word is used in the latter part of this same verse where He says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." While it is true that these two words are used, in some passages, almost interchangeably, yet that they have a distinct meaning is clear from several considerations. If the usage of each word be carefully traced through the New Testament it will be found that the former (*erotao*) is expressive of familiar entreaty, whereas the second (*aiteo*) signifies a lowly petition. Hence, whilst the Lord Jesus is found employing the former in His asking the Father on behalf of His disciples, never once does He use the latter term. Even more significant is it to find that Martha—who had not sat at His feet and learned of Him as had her more spiritual sister—used the latter word when she said, "I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee" (John 11:22); failing to discern the Divine glory of His person, she supposed

that He would have to appeal to God as a suppliant. According to its classical usage, "erotao" signifies "to ask questions, to make inquiry in order to obtain information." It is employed in this sense in a number of passages: to seek no further, we find it bearing this meaning in John 16:19. "Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do you inquire among yourselves?" But like the words "in that day," so "ye shall ask me nothing" seem to have a double significance here—a relative and an absolute, an immediate and remote, a primary and an ultimate. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John 16:23). Here is the second key to the first part of this verse, so far as its primary meaning and immediate application is concerned: asking the Father everything, is contrasted from asking the Son nothing. "In that day" refers primarily to the time when, the Holy Spirit was given to them, in which "day" we are now living. But when the Holy Spirit came, Christ would be absent; then, instead of asking the Savior questions (as they did constantly while He was with them), they would petition the Father. "The Lord is really signifying the great change from recourse to Him as their Messiah on earth for every difficulty, not for questions only, but for all they might want day by day, to that access to the Father into which He would introduce them as the accepted Man and glorified Savior on high" (Mr. W. Kelly). This accounts for the "Verily, verily" with which Christ introduced this second statement: it emphasized the certainty and sufficiency of the new recourse of the disciples which He now made known unto them. And how this emphasized His "it is expedient for you that I go away" (John 16:7)! Petitions in Christ's all-prevailing name the apostles would be permitted to present to the Father, which was something no saint before the Cross had ever been instructed to urge. As the God of Israel He had been known: but now believers were to approach Him in the conscious relationship of children addressing their Father! But if we look forward to the ultimate fulfillment of Christ's words "in that day ye shall ask me nothing," they signify that in the Glory we shall know even as we are known, and there will no longer be any need to interrogate Him about any of the problems which now so sorely perplex us. Then we shall—to speak in the language of the context—understand the meaning of our present "sorrows" and "rejoice" forever, for the wise Love that appointed them. Having thus pointed us forward to the final goal, the Lord provides encouragement for us as we journey toward it—"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you." The "whatsoever" must be qualified by whatever is for the Father's glory, will promote His Son's interests, and is for our good. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name" (John 16:24). The Lord was not reproving His disciples for a failure in their prayer-life, but was announcing one of the consequences of the great change then at hand. If the reader will note carefully what we said on John 14:13, 14, he will see how impossible it was for saints to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus before His ascension. In the previous verses we have learned what the results of the coming of the Spirit would be saintwards, here we are shown the effects Godwards. Consequent on Christ's exaltation, the Spirit in and with believers would draw out their hearts in prayer, teaching them to present their petitions to the Father in the all-prevailing name of the Son. "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24). "I enjoin you thus to pray, that not only may you be delivered from all despondency and heart-trouble, but that in the enjoyment of all heavenly and spiritual blessings, and in the possession of all that is necessary and sufficient to secure the success of the great enterprise on which you are about to enter, you may be filled with holy happiness, heavenly joy—joy in the Holy Spirit. There is a close connection between the two advices given by an apostle under the influence of the Spirit of His Master: 'Rejoice evermore: pray without ceasing' (1 Thess. 5:16, 17). The second is the means of securing the first. If we cease to pray, we are likely to cease to rejoice—we must 'pray without ceasing' that we may 'rejoice evermore': and were we, instead of being anxious, careful, and troubled about many things, to 'be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, make our requests known unto God, with thanksgiving' (Phil. 4:6), assuredly the 'peace of God, would keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus'; and, amid external

troubles, our joy would be full" (Mr. John Brown). "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father" (John 16:25). It will be noted that the margin gives "parables" as an alternative for "proverbs." In this word of Christ there is, again, a fulness of meaning which no brief definition can comprehend. In the Greek there are two words used (for the one Hebrew word "mashal")—"parabole" and "paroimia": the former is never used in John's Gospel: the latter occurs in John 10:6 and here. Possibly it had been better to render it "dark saying" in the present instance, as the Lord sets it in antithesis to "showing plainly of the Father." And yet the thoughts connected with "proverbs" is not to be excluded. The wisdom of Solomon is recorded in his "Proverbs." So the Lord here intimates that He, the Truth, the "greater than Solomon," would not do otherwise than speak in sentences with a fulness of meaning which no mere mental acumen can penetrate. But again, the Greek word here may properly be rendered "parables," and the distinctive idea connected with this term is probably to be included as well. "Parables are truths given and yet concealed from those who cannot or will not receive them; but to the ready heart that can take them in, they can be made known, as we see in Matthew 13:13-16. The parables there were not understood by His enemies and would not have been by the disciples, but He opened them. A parable is not a story to illustrate a truth; it is the truth itself. As though He would say, 'It will not be received, but I will speak it nevertheless.' It is like a nut, needing to be cracked open, but the kernel is there; and rich too. Now He had spoken to them in that way. Many of the incidents that occur have truth in them that would be open only to the ear and eye of the new man, enlightened and exercised by the Holy Spirit. "He had said these things, whether they understood them or not; but the hour was coming when He would no more speak unto them in parables, but would show them plainly of the Father. That is now by the Holy Spirit. 'There is no book in me Scripture that is more full of teaching that requires fellowship with the subject, and the mind of the writer—the Spirit—than the Gospel of John. Wherein we fail, it is that we are so little in fellowship with Him. The deeper the fellowship, the more thoroughly we would understand all that has been told. That is, men, the reason for speaking in parables, but not doing it when the Holy Spirit comes (there are no parables in the Epistles, and note 2 Corinthians 3:12: A.W.P.). The Holy Spirit's business is to take of the things of Christ and tell them out and make them actually ours." (Mr. Malachi Taylor). The Lord went on to say that the time (hour) was at hand when He would speak no more obscurely to the disciples, but would plainly "show them of the Father." This promise began to be accomplished even before Pentecost. On the very day of His resurrection, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded" to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, "the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). To Mary Magdalene He made known that His Father was His brethren's Father (John 20:17). So in Luke 24:45 we are also told, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." But the complete fulfillment was given in the coming of the Spirit to guide them into all the Truth: then the veil was completely taken off their hearts, and with open face they contemplated the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In John 16:14 the Lord had said the Spirit would "show," here He says "I will show"; there He had spoken of the Spirit showing the things "of mine," here "I will show of the Father." This interchange strikingly attests the unity of the three Persons in the Godhead. "At that day ye shall ask in my name" (John 16:26). In the day of the Spirit believers would ask the Father in the name of Christ, not only plead His name as a motive, but come to God in the value of His person. What an incentive is this for each Christian reader to engage in this holy exercise! "The benefit of prayer is so great that it cannot be expressed. Prayer is the dove which, when sent out, returns again, bringing with it the olive-leaf, namely, peace of heart. Prayer is the golden chain which God holds fast, and lets not go until He blesses. Prayer is the Moses' rod which brings forth the water of consolation out of the Rock of Salvation. Prayer is Samson's jawbone, which smites down our enemies. Prayer is David's harp, before which the evil spirit

flies. Prayer is the key to heaven's treasures" (John Gerhard.) "And I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you." The first design of Christ in these words was to repel a false notion which many have entertained, namely that the Father must be besought by Christ before He will notice us. It is not that Christ here denies that He would intercede for us, but He would assure us that such intercession on His part is not needed to induce the Father to love us—the next verse makes it very clear. It was Christ assuring His disciples that, following His exaltation ("in that day"), the way would be open for them to come into the Father's presence. "I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you." "This no more denies Christ's intercession for us, than John 16:23 forbids the servant praying to his Lord about His work or His house. It is not an absolute statement, but it is simply an ellipse, which the words following explain." (Mr. W. Kelly.) "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." (John 16:27). This at once indicates the line of thought in the Savior's mind at the close of the previous verse. It was not that He had to coerce the Father either to hear our prayers or to love us. The favors which we receive from the Father are not extorted from Him by the importunate pleading of the Savior. So far from the Father having no regard for our happiness He loves us, loves us with a special love of approbation because we love His Son: therefore is He ever ready to minister to our welfare, watching over us with paternal affection and care. The Father does not love us because Christ intercedes for us; but Christ intercedes for us because we are the objects of the Father's special love. What a blessed word is this! Spoken for our assurance and comfort as we journey homewards. Whatsoever they ask in Christ's name shall be given them, is secured by the love of the Father, no less than by the intercession of Christ; nay, even more so, inasmuch as the only fountain is more than the only channel, though both are equally necessary in their own places." (Mr. John Brown.) "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." It is to be noted that "love" is here placed before "believing." One reason for this was because Christ had just been speaking of love in the previous verse; now He proceeds to speak of faith so as to prepare the way for that profession of faith which the disciples at once made. But no doubt the word "believe" here is used as in John 14:1. It was not the initial act of faith in the Lord Jesus, but the confiding in and on Him after His return to the Father. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." (John 16:28). "Having been led to mention His coming forth from God, our Lord concludes His explicatory remarks by stating in the fewest words the truths which, above all others, it was of importance that the disciples should hold fast in the hour of temptation, which was just coming on them to try them." (Mr. John Brown.) These are the vital facts for faith to lay hold of. First, Christ came forth from the Father. He is the heavenly One come down to earth; not only "sent" officially, but "come" by voluntary consent. Second, He came into the world; and why? That He might be the Savior of sinners. Third, He has gone back to the Father. How? Through death and resurrection. With what intent? To diffuse from on high the benefits of His redeeming work. Christ's design here was to show the apostles how fully warranted was their confidence in Himself. "His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou earnest forth from God." (John 16:29, 30). This confession of the apostles looks back to what Christ had just said in John 16:27, 28. The assurance that the Father Himself loved them had comforted their hearts: the declaration from their Master's own lips that they "loved and believed" in Him gave them new confidence. As Calvin beautifully puts it: "The disciples did not fully understand the meaning of Christ's discourse; but though they were not capable of this, the mere odor of it refreshed them." All was no longer dark to them; their faith was confirmed. When they declared, "now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb" (obscure saying), they were looking back to what He had said in John 16:25. It seems clear that the apostles imagined the "day" the Lord mentioned had already

arrived, and that their Master was now making good His promise to them. This is the more evident from their statement, "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee," which looks back to John 16:23: "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing." "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou earnest forth from God." The disciples perceived that the Lord had accurately discerned their thoughts, and, unasked, had solved their difficulties. Yet it is dear that they failed to take in the fulness of what He had just said. They believed that He had come forth from "God" (John 16:27). So far, so good. But He had spoken of coming forth from "the Father" and of returning to Him (John 16:28). Upon this they were silent, and for a very good reason: at that time they neither believed nor understood that deeper point of view. The "Father" is God truly. But God speaks of the one Divine Being who is over all Creator, Governor, Sustainer, Judge. Father speaks of relationship, the relationship of God to His children. Of this the disciples, as yet, understood little, perhaps nothing. "We believe that thou camest forth from God." Really this went no further than a confession that He was the promised Messiah. Nicodemus said, "Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God" (John 3:2). The woman of Samaria exclaimed, "Come see a man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29). Those who witnessed the miracle of the loaves avowed, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14). Peter testified, "We believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God"—not "Father"! (John 6:69). Martha said, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." (John 11:27). The word of the apostles here in John 16:30 went no farther than these other confessions. "We believe that thou camest forth from God." In truth they had apprehended nothing that raised them above the effect of Christ's rejection; only the realization that He came forth from the Father and was returning to Him, could give this. "They had no conception of the mighty change from all that they had gathered of the Kingdom as revealed in the Old Testament, to the new state of things that would follow His absence with the Father on high and the presence of the Holy Spirit here below. It sounded plain to their ears; but even up to the ascension they feebly, if at all, caught a glimpse of it. They to the last clung to the hopes of Israel, and these surely remain to be fulfilled another day. But they understood not this 'Day,' during which, if the Jews are treated as reprobate, even as He was rejected of them, those born of God should in virtue of Christ and His work be placed in immediate relationship with the Father. His return to the Father was a parable still, though the Lord does not correct their error, as indeed it was useless: they would soon enough learn how little they knew. But at least even then, they had the inward consciousness that He knew all, and, as He penetrated their thoughts had no need that any should ask Him. 'Herein we believe that thou camest out from God.' Undoubtedly—yet how far below the truth He had uttered (in John 16:28), is that which they were thus confessing! The Spirit of His Son sent into their hearts would give them in due time to know the Father; as redemption accomplished and accepted could alone provide the needful ground for this" (The Bible Treasury). No wonder the Lord had just previously announced to the apostles: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"! "Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?" (John 16:31). It seems to us that the Lord was here challenging their faith. In a real sense they did believe that He was the promised Messiah—"come out from God." But their faith was on the eve of being severely tested, and under that testing it would be shaken to its very foundations; though fail it would not. He with His own omniscient foresight, knew what lay ahead of them. The indignity, the sufferings, the crucifixion of their Master would indeed cause them to be "offended." Their faith was genuine; but it was not strong as they supposed. This explains, we think, the "now"—"Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?"; ye believe Me while I am with you and things are going according to your minds, but what will you do when I shall be taken from you, delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, die, and be buried! The Lord then was warning them against their self-confidence.

"We need not doubt that the profession of the Eleven was real and sincere. They honestly meant what they said. But they did not know themselves. They did not know what they were capable of doing under the pressure of the fear of men and strong temptation. They had not rightly estimated the weakness of the flesh, the power of the Devil, the feebleness of their own resolutions, the shallowness of their own faith. All this they had yet to learn by painful experience. Like young recruits, they had yet to learn that it is one thing to know the soldier's drill and wear the uniform, and quite another to be steadfast in the day of battle. Let us mark these things and learn wisdom. The true secret of spiritual strength is self-distrust and deep humility. 'When I am weak, then am I strong' (2 Cor. 12:10). None of us, perhaps, have the least idea how much we might fall if placed suddenly under the influence of strong temptation. Happy is he who never forgets the words, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,' and, remembering our Lord's disciples, pray daily, 'Hold thou me up and then I shall be safe.'" (Bishop Ryle). "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone" (John 16:32). This was spoken for the disciples' sakes, that His prediction of the heavy hour of pressure might prepare them for it. It was said to humble them, to destroy their present self-confidence. Note the opening, "Behold" to arrest their attention! "Ye shall be scattered!" Without the Shepherd, they would be dispersed abroad. "Every man to his own"—his own shelter or hiding-place. Each of them would provide for his own safety. When the storm burst there was shelter for all but Christ. He performed His Work of Atonement alone, because He alone was qualified to do it. "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16:32). How gracious of the Savior to address this word for the comfort of their hearts! Moreover, the consciousness of the Father's presence was the stay of His own heart. This is clear from Isaiah 50:7, "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." "Let us here, in transition to the following verse mark how all this is a type for the entire future of the Church. Often is this scattering of the disciples from His presence repeated, in various degrees and with various manifestations, but He is not alone. And even if in this day all men were to leave Him, He abides what He is, and the Father is with Him. His holy cause can never be forsaken or lost" (Stier). Similarly Calvin remarks: "Whosoever well ponders this will hold firm his faith though the world shake, nor will the defection of all others overturn his confidence; we do not render God full honor unless He alone is felt to be sufficient to us." "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace" (John 16:33). Having made a final reference to the awful "hour" then at hand, the Lord winds up His matchless discourse with a parting word of encouragement and victory. He here condenses into a single sentence the instruction which He had given them in the upper room. The "peace" of His own was what His tender heart was concerned about. "Ever thinking more of others than of Himself, even in this near prospect of the bitter Cross, He forgets His own grief in the grief of His disciples. He is occupied in comforting those who ought to have been His comforters" (Mr. G. Brown). The "peace" of which He spake can be enjoyed only by communion with Himself. In the previous verse He had mentioned their forsaking Him; but He had not forsaken them. Three days later He would return with His "peace be unto you" (John 20:19), then did they learn, once for all, that in Him alone was peace to be found. But He does not hide from them the fact that "in the world" they should have "tribulation," but He first assures them that, notwithstanding this, there was peace for them in Him. "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). This is not to be restricted to the violent enmity of the ungodly. It is a general term for distress of any kind. The Latin word from which our "tribulation" is taken, was used of the flail which separated the wheat from the chaff. There are temptations, trials, troubles in the world as well as from it. "In the world" is to be in the place of testing. While the Christian is left down here he suffers from the weakness and weariness of the body, from temporal losses and disappointments, from the severing of cherished ties, as well as from the sneers and taunts, the hatred and persecution of the world. But though

"in the world" is tribulation, "in Christ" there is "peace." The world cannot rob us of that, nor can its evil "prince" destroy it. But let us never forget that this "peace" is only enjoyed by faith. It is only as we abide in conscious communion with the Savior that we can anticipate the unclouded and unending joys of the future. The peace which is for us in Christ is appropriated just so far as faith lays hold of our perfect acceptance, our eternal security, and our wondrous portion in Him. "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). The influence and power of "the world" is powerful, but not all-powerful. It has been fought and overcome. One greater than it, mightier than its "prince," has been here, and vanquished it. The world did its utmost in the battle, but the Son of God prevailed. Noah condemned the world (Heb. 11:7), but Christ conquered it. It has no longer any power left but what He permits. It was in the way of temptation, suffering and obedience that He fought and won. Therefore let us "Be of good cheer." The world is a conquered world; it has been conquered for us by Christ. Then let us take courage. The storms of trial and persecution may sometimes beat fiercely upon us; but let them only drive us closer to Christ. "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." What a glorious close for this Discourse! The foundation of peace is our Savior's personal victory, here anticipated by Him before the conflict! How this should stimulate us. The world is still essentially the same; but so is Christ! And our Lord is still saying, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." There must be no surrender, no compromise, no fellowship with the world. Here is our Lord's war-cry: him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Ere long the conflict will cease by the victory gained, for "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). The day is nigh at hand when Christ shall come to reward His servants. Then shall the victor be crowned. "And oh, the delight of casting these crowns at His feet, and ascribing forever and ever, glory, and honor, and dominion and blessing to the Great Overcomer, to Him who conquered for us, who conquered in us, who made us more than conquerors! It is sweet to anticipate this glorious result of all our tribulations and struggles; and in the enjoyment of peace in Him amidst these struggles and tribulations, to raise, though in broken accents, and with a tremulous voice, the song which, like the sound of great waters, shall unceasingly, everlastingly, echo through heaven, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain'" (Mr. John Brown). Let the student work on the following questions as preparation for our next lesson:— 1. What does the "lifting up of His eyes" teach us, verse 1? 2. What did Christ refer to in "glorify thy Son," verse 1? 3. How is verse 2 related to Christ's petition? 4. Does verse 3 give a definition of "eternal life" or—? 5. Why did Christ refer to the Father as "the only true God," verse 3? 6. What was Christ's "glory" before the world, verse 5? 7. By how many different pleas (in verses 1, 4) does Christ support His petition in verse 5?

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